FAMILY LIFE

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SCHOOLS CAN PROMOTE GOOD MARRIAGES

Since every study shows that a large part of the population marries persons with whom they went to school, this being in fact the principal source of acquaintances resulting in matrimony, the high school and college may well organize to promote mate selection more effectively.

Suggestions to this end were asked from 90 adult students, mostly women, representing every part of the United States. The majority were teachers but the group also included nurses, social workers, and home-makers. Their suggestions, listed in order of importance as they judged them, follow:

1. In the extra-curricular activities.

Swimming parties, dances (in the afternoon, because less formal), picnics, class parties, art clubs, music clubs, hikes, week-end camping trips, canoeing, special holiday celebrations, faculty entertainment of small groups, theatricals, school paper, special clubs such as Hi-Y, Blue Triangle; practice teas, formal proms.

2. In the set-up of the school.

Home-room plan, class organization, social hour weekly, student government, students responsible for the social activities of the school, coordinated student activities (e.g., Hi-Y and Blue Triangle officers plan social events together), co-education in all classes, school clinic for student problems, smaller schools and smaller classes, longer recitation periods with less home work assigned.

3. In methods of teaching.

More informal classwork, socialized recitations, assignment of special trips, use of literature to teach home and family life, much problem solving and project work, discussion groups, public speaking emphasized in all class work.

4. In the type of work offered or in the curriculum.

Classes in home-making for both sexes, some mixed athletic classes, orientation course in etiquet, social dancing classes, orchestra and glee club for credit, courses in budgeting, in personal relations, in how to be attractive (including art and clothing classes); courses in biology, physiology, mental hygiene, and sex education.

5. In the teaching personnel.

Teachers selected who are interested in pupils' all-around development, who have a broad and sane outlook on life and its problems—those

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who can promote happy relationships by arranging for meetings of students, for escorts to dances and parties; those who can chaperone student affairs in good fun and who will entertain students in their own homes.

6. In the housing situation.

Dormitories for each sex with joint recreation rooms; dining rooms in common; less formality in the cafeterias. Recreational room or student union where all may meet between classes. Informal browsing room in the library. Card file with addresses of all students, open for consultation.

7. In the teacher-parent-pupil relationships.

Teachers accept the "love affairs" of the school wholesomely instead of treating them flippantly. Parent groups organized to study the adolescent and ways in which he may profitably spend his leisure time; to learn that puppy love is natural and wholesome and should be treated as such; that they can do much by offering hospitality in their homes and allowing their children to do so.

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GROWING CITIES

Substantial increase in population between 1940 and 1947 occurred in most metropolitan districts, the federal Census Bureau announces in a release on August 24, 1947.

Among the metropolitan districts with particularly large percentage increases in population are Norfolk-Portsmouth-Newport News with 43%, San Francisco-Oakland with 39%, Los Angeles with 35%, Seattle and Washington, D. C., each with 33%, and Portland (Ore.) and San Antonio with 31%. The Scranton-Wilkes Barre district with a decline of 15% is the only one showing a loss.

"Even larger percentage increases were found in the number of private households than in the population," and "in practically all instances, the average population per household either declined or did not change appreciably."

The proportion of married couples who had not established their own households but were sharing the living quarters of others in April, 1947, ranged from about 5% to 15%, with the Atlanta and Memphis metropolitan districts showing particular overcrowding.

All these figures add up to a deterioration of family life in America. Cities are always unfavorable—indeed, slowly destructive—to families. Since the farms are already overpopulated, an increase of the population of small towns and rural non-farm areas seems to be one of the greatest needs in the nation's planning.

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EDUCATIONAL NOTES

Campus crowding required postponement of the Marriage Institute which had been set for Sept. 13-15 at Pennsylvania State College. It may be held in the Spring of 1948.

Women in Action is an 8-page abstract bulletin, published by Current Reports (Box 100, Murray Hill Station, New York 16, N. Y.) at $5 per year. It reviews articles in 80 periodicals.

Education for Responsible Parenthood, 1946-47, is reviewed in a report

from the Mississippi Social Hygiene Assn. (Box 1700, Jackson, Miss.). Its program reached 21,853 residents of the state, 90% of them mothers.

Friendship's Odyssey is the title of a book published in London by Francoise Delisle, who was the companion of Havelock Ellis during his later years. It throws a bright light on a period which Ellis himself had neglected in his posthumous and remarkably frank autobiography. The two books will not increase the admiration of most readers for the pioneer "sexologist."

South Carolina citizens will decide, by state-wide vote, whether they want to amend their constitution to permit divorce, now prohibited.

Facing a demand for many more psychiatrists in the U. S., medical authorities are trying to find out how to select candidates who will succeed. The National Research Council is paying for an investigation at the Menninger Foundation, Topeka, Kans. Surveying current practice of admission to medical schools the inquirers found that only one out of three instructors felt that a candidate should be disqualified because he had (1) a history of sexual intimacy with patients or (2) a tendency to cheat with money. Screening out all candidates except those who seemed to be emotionally normal, the researchers found that some of the latter did not become good psychiatrists, and they therefore modified their standards in order to take in those who are "slightly abnormal." (Newsweek, Aug. 25, 1947.)

At Duke University (N.C.) the Veterans Administration has surveyed married student veterans. Of those who were in school before wartime service, 71% said they were getting higher grades than formerly, 25% reported no change, 4% lower grades.

Teaching of human relations, including family relations and group living, is being done much better in the elementary schools than in the high schools at present, declared Dr. Dorothy McCuskey, curriculum coordinator of the state department of public instruction in Wisconsin, to a meeting of school administrators at Miami University, Ohio. The conference (which was set up at the NEA convention in Buffalo in 1946) went on record that "the school should make available a course or courses in home life and family relations for both boys and girls on the secondary school level, also teacher training courses in these fields."

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I have heard that boys are more likely to be born in a mixed marriage . . .

Ans.—The usual sex ratio at birth is about 105 boys to every 100 girls. A study in a New York hospital found that this ratio held good, among parents who were foreign-born, if both came from the same country. When the parents were born in different European countries the infants were 123 males to every 100 females. Similar results have been found in mating distinct strains of smaller animals.

What is the relative fertility of marriages in the various religious groups?

Ans.—Data are scarce, but the Indianapolis Survey found Roman Catholic couples to be 18% more fertile, Jewish couples 25% less fertile, than Protestant couples.

RAISE A BIGGER CROP OF GOOD HUSBANDS

Since there are always more boys born than girls, the lack of good husbands—of which many women complain—is not due to an actual shortage of men so much as to a waste of men. This calls for a national policy of conservation, to take the abundance of existing material early enough in life to produce better husbands from it. The job demands cooperation from home, school, church, and community, and the American Institute of Family Relations is giving much of its time to the promotion of such cooperation. Our observation of husbands who have failed leads us to believe that the production of a better crop demands such measures as the following:

1. More masculine patterns in the home. Father must stay on the job and not leave the rearing of boys entirely to their mother.

2. More masculine patterns in daily life. The home should make wider use of community organizations such as the Boy Scouts, Y.M.C.A., summer camps, and other places where boys can associate with superior men. More men teachers in the schools are an imperative need.

3. Easing up the present unfair competition which, throughout the school system, puts boys in competition with girls who are too mature for them. The girl matures more rapidly, biologically, emotionally, and socially so the high school girl of 15 may be two or three years more mature, in those respects, than the boy of 15 in the same class. Girls therefore take too much of the initiative in their relations with boys. It is necessary to help boys develop more initiative in dealing with girls; to help them develop a normal masculine aggressiveness and self-confidence and to avoid inferiority complexes. This calls for more mixing of boys and girls in school projects, committees, and the like, on the basis of their actual maturity instead of chronological age. It demands that boys in the high school levels go, socially, to a considerable extent with girls who are a few years younger than themselves.

4. Building up in both sexes of a fuller understanding of the psychological differences between the sexes. Boys must not be allowed to grow up with a fear of women, which many of them now unconsciously have. They must not be allowed to grow up with a feeling that women are an inferior sex. They must learn to understand that women have, in many large areas of life, a scale of values wholly different from that of men; that women want to be treated as intelligent individuals and not merely as females; and that these differences in the behavior of men and women help to make life much more interesting! This calls for the improvement of the courses in many branches of the high school curriculum. It demands the gradual elimination of teachers, whether men or women, who are so warped and biased that their influence and example will be harmful. Many teachers can improve their courses in biological or social sciences, in health, physical education, home economics, or English literature, by getting a better understanding of the normal relationship between the two sexes,

neither one of which is complete without the other. The Institute is providing abundant material for this purpose, to schools and colleges in every state of the Union.

5. Development of a view of marriage as a cooperative enterprise in home-making, rather than a mere "romance" based on glamour. Young women complain widely that the young men with whom they associate are selfish and self-centered, inconsiderate, and lacking in manners. Boys must grow up to accept adult responsibility, but avoid patriarchal attempts to dominate, which most modern women will not tolerate. Until the schools teach every boy, and every girl, the real meaning of marriage and family life, many men who might have been good husbands will continue to be discards. Any high school can do this effectively, if it will make use of the experience of the most successful schools in the nation — an experience which has been summarized in many publications that they can get from their own local and state departments of education or from the American Institute of Family Relations.

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RESEARCH NOTES

Taxi-dancers "may be viewed as a threat, in many instances, to the status of women in general, to the integrity of the family, to the personal integration of the patron, and to the whole socialization process," declares Dr. Clyde B. Vedder, who studied such places of recreation in Detroit and Los Angeles. He is convinced that the taxi-dance hall "competes in socially significant ways with other recreational institutions of the community and with the primary social institutions—the church, family, and neighborhood." (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Southern California, 1947.)

Ear-drums, instead of finger-prints, may serve for identification, according to E. Luescher, a Swiss biologist who has been studying them. Study of 13 characteristics of the ear-drum showed that they were inherited and little changed by diseases of the ear.

American civilization is more matriarchal than any other, John Gunther concludes after surveying every state in the Union and embodying the results in his book, "Inside U. S. A."

Boys, on the whole, are more careful dishwashers than girls, Carol Biba reports in the Christian Science Monitor.

Percentage of U. S. women who are full-time home-makers has dropped from 76.6 in 1900 to 60.6 in 1945.

Three-fourths of the physicians in the U. S. received no medical instruction in contraception control, Dr. Alan F. Guttmacher of Johns Hopkins University learned from a questionnaire. But 96% of them approved of contraception on medical indications, 80% merely for "child spacing." (Human Fertility, March, 1947.)

Of 10,363 interlocutory decrees of divorce granted in Los Angeles County during the first half of 1947, only 328 were contested, according to the Research Department of the AIFR. This is only about three per cent! Whatever the intent of the law may be, it is clear that virtually every divorce represents "mutual consent," even though this consent may sometimes have been extorted or compelled.

NEW BOOKS IN BRIEF REVIEW

MARRIAGE IS ON TRIAL, by John A. Sbarbaro. Pp. 128, price $2 from the Macmillan Co., 60 Fifth Ave., New York 11, N. Y., 1947.

"Too often marriage succeeds or fails for small reasons," says this Chicago divorce judge, and he discusses the customary ones with good sense. The only way the divorce rise can be halted "is by making marriage itself more desirable than many people find it today," and he calls not merely for better education, but for special courses of instruction, which every applicant must pass before getting a license to wed. He would have such a course cover economic adjustments, sexual adjustments, in-law problems, child psychology, and the effects of divorce. Beyond this he demands that the church take a much more active part in promoting successful marriage and preventing breakups. Their young people's groups could function much more efficiently than at present. Judge Sbarboro's remarks are practical and constructive throughout.

CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY of Children's Behavior Problems, by C. M. Louttit. Pp. 661, price $4.50 from Harper & Bros., 49 E. 33rd St., New York 16, N. Y., 1947.

First published in 1936, this book has been revised and brought up to date by the author (now dean of Sampson College, a post-war creation of New York State). It is written primarily for college students who intend to take up such work as that done by child guidance clinics. It covers the field with innumerable citations of evidence from the literature, that will be of value to many readers. It is well to be reminded, for instance, that homes broken by divorce have much more deleterious effect on children than do those broken by death; that this influence is the more harmful, the younger the child at the time of the break; and that loss of father is more harmful than loss of mother, in the production of juvenile delinquents. The general point of view is conservative and Dr. Louttit wisely reminds students that "diagnosis cannot be read about in a book and then applied to clinical cases"; there is no substitute for experience. Specialists will naturally feel that he has not done justice to their own particular subjects: as one illustration, the discussion of heredity is inadequate.

THIS LOVE OF OURS, by Leslie R. Smith. Pp. 100, price $1 from Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 150 Fifth Ave., New York 11, N. Y., 1947.

"How to build an enduring marriage" is the topic of this practical but inspirational book by the pastor of the Central Christian Church, Lexington, Ky. It will be widely useful in establishing Christian homes on sound foundations.

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AROUND THE WORLD

Nearly 30% of all mothers in Great Britain today conceive their first baby before marriage, according to a recent report from the Registrar-General's office.

"Marriage Guidance" is a new monthly bulletin issued by the Marriage Guidance Council, 78 Duke St., London, the first number of which appeared in July. In an introductory

note the editor, Dr. David Mace, explains, "Marriage Guidance in its layout frankly copies the excellent bulletin issued by the American Institute of Family Relations."

Australia's first Marriage Guidance Council has been set up in Sydney.

The Mexican Eugenics Society recently invited its members to the exhibition of a new educational film, "El Origen de la Natalidad."

Family life in Great Britain today is defended by less than one-fourth of the population, according to a recent Gallup Poll which asked, "Generally speaking, do you think that family life today is more successful or less successful than it was in your parents' generation?" Men and women agreed in their views: 22% said more successful, 48% said less successful, 16% said no difference, 14% said "don't know."

Canadian husbands give their wives less help with the housework than do those in Britain, according to Gallup Polls in the two countries. In England 47% of the men, in Canada only 23%, claimed to give regular assistance. Women did not take quite such an optimistic view: 36% of British women and 19% of Canadian women admitted their husbands helped regularly in the home.

Illegitimacy rate in the British West Indies is reported as approximately 70%.

Surgical sterilization of the husband was held by an English Court of Appeal to be grounds for dissolving a marriage. Actually the husband had himself sterilized before marriage, his bride knew it, and the marriage lasted 11 years before she learned that she might have a right to annulment. British eugenists are disturbed by the implications of the decision.

Finland gives no family allowance for the first four children. For the fifth and succeeding children, it pays the parents $2.25 a month.

Since 1929 the provincial government of Quebec has undertaken to prepare girls for successful homemaking, and now subsidizes 93 schools for the purpose (Ecole Menagere Regionale). The full course requires four years but many girls take short courses in preparation for approaching marriage. The schools cover not merely the usual curriculum of home economics but health and physical education, natural sciences, literature, household physics, rural arts and crafts, psychology, and religion.

Beginning July 5, 1948, every expectant mother in England, no matter what her income, will be entitled under the National Health Service Act to free pre- and post-natal care, and no charge will be made for her confinement, whether at home or in hospital, or for the services of a doctor, specialist, or anesthetist.

Six German women, taken on a tour of Great Britain to see democracy at work, were particularly impressed with the way English men helped their wives with the housework.

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Farm population of the U. S. at the beginning of 1947 was 27,550,000, according to the federal Census Bureau. This represents a decline of three million, or almost 10%, from 1940.

Births in 1947 will exceed the record high mark of 2,440,000 last year, the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. predicts.

MAN, THE ANIMAL

In the last 24 hours more than one-sixth of a million of "fresh new human beings" have appeared upon this earth. What kind of animals are they? How long will they live? How will they get along with each other?

Such questions were taken up by the late Raymond Pearl in a series of lectures at Indiana University in 1938. His death in 1940 delayed their publication. They now appear under the title, "Man, the Animal" (pp. 128, price $2 from Principia Press, Bloomington, Ind., 1946).

Outstanding differences between man and other mammals, Dr. Pearl recalls, are his habitually upright posture, his big brain, his capacity for articulate speech, and his longer life span. His primary business is getting a living, and four broad stages or cultural types may be distinguished:

1. Hunting.
2. Pastoral life.
3. Agriculture.
4. Industry-commerce-service.

Each of these represents an advance over its predecessor in providing greater economic security with less physical labor. In other words, progressive evolution has enabled man to "get by," to acquire the means of living, with less effort than other animals. His range of variability is also greater, but smallest in physical traits, largest in mental traits such as sensory discrimination, judgment, and particularly behavior.

Man has also extended his span of life, partly as a result of this economy of physical exertion. No other mammal approaches him in longevity—stories of long-lived elephants are mythical, the extreme being not more than 85 years. Length of life is due almost entirely to one's heredity. People who live to 90 or 100 show the same range of difference in personal hygiene as the short-lived; "in only one outstanding respect did the group differ markedly . . . That is in the fact that a vast majority of these extremely longevous folk were of a placid temperament, not given to worry."

But outside influences, of course, may prevent expression of one's inheritance. Dr. Pearl (professor of biology at Johns Hopkins University) made extensive studies of two of the most controversial — alcohol and tobacco. Contrary to widespread expectation, the latter was found to be the more damaging to health, even if not to behavior! Moderate drinking did not seem to shorten life, although heavy drinking did; but even moderate smoking cut down one's expectation of old age, and "the life table for heavy smokers is definitely worse than that for heavy drinkers up to about age 60."

What of the future? Much of the book is taken up by inferences or speculations on an evolutionary framework. Population has increased too rapidly and there will have to be a deliberate slow-down, which has already begun. "The average individual enjoyment of plenty will be greater and keener if there are fewer individuals to divide it among." In particular, "sensible men are not likely indefinitely to permit a great part of the plenty that might be enjoyed by the fit wasted on a growing horde of sorry specimens that any intelligent

breeder, or nature herself if permitted, would promptly eliminate as of no biological worth. The eugenists are grappling with the problem of devising adequate and practical ways of accomplishing this result."

The fit—those who are able to support themselves under ordinary conditions instead of being a lifelong burden on the rest of the population—will then have to learn to live more successfully with each other. Dr. Pearl attempts to derive from purely biological principles a form of government "in which all ultimate governmental power rested in and was equally distributed among all the people composing the group." The first objective of such government would be to preserve and encourage individual differences—the method of democracy but not of totalitarian dictatorship—but it would also "give opportunity and encouragement to the superior individual to rise to leadership"—an opportunity that democracies have sometimes regarded unfavorably.

Its second main objective would be to limit the extent and duration of power that any man or group of men could have over their fellows. "It would do this on the ground that freedom to exercise concentrated power is the one kind of liberty that no man or no limited group of men can be entrusted with; there is still too much of the beast in his makeup." At any cost, whether real or imagined, to group efficiency, Society would make certain that "no man could exercise more influence over the lives of his fellows than what would be temporarily derived from his true innate superiority as a man."

"In guarantees of liberty, opportunity, and strictly limited concentration of power, coupled with a general condition of plenty, there is reason to hope and believe that real social security would reside."

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INEXPENSIVE PAMPHLETS

THE STORY OF HUMAN BIRTH, by Alan F. Guttmacher, pp. 214, price 25c from Penguin Books (on newsstands, etc.). "Best buy" of the month is this standard work by a Johns Hopkins obstetrician, originally issued in 1937 under the title, "Into This Universe."

FAMILY ALLOWANCES, by Francis J. Corley, pp. 40, price 25c from Institute of Social Order, 3115 Grand Blvd., St. Louis 18, Mo. Forty countries now have some system of family allowance. Dr. Corley (sociologist at St. Louis University) examines the advantages, refutes the common objections, and declares that the U. S. must adopt them.

VITALITY AND CIVILIZATION, by Griscom Morgan, pp. 28, price 25c from Human Events Associates, 608 S. Dearborn St., Chicago 5, Ill. Strong argument for "giving adolescents apprenticeship in adult responsibility."

WHEN YOU GROW OLDER, by George Lawton and Maxwell S. Stewart, pp. 31, price 20c from Public Affairs Committee, 22 E. 38th St., New York 16, N. Y. Best short discussion of the subject now available, and deserves wide circulation.

THE AMERICAN FAMILY AND ITS HOUSING, special number (April, 1947) of the American Sociological Review, price $1 from Ernest R. Mowrer, managing editor, Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill.

THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF FAMILY RELATIONS

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